

Town of Ancram
Agriculture & Farmland Protection Plan Project Team Meeting
April 6, 2009
5 PM

Present: Art Bassin, Sue Bassin, Barry Chase, Harold Miller, Don MacLean, Marnie MacLean, Dennis Sigler, Jerry Peele
From Glynwood Center: Virginia Kasinki

The meeting was called to order by Art Bassin at 5 PM.

The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes of the March 2 meeting.

1. Glynwood – Glynwood Center is an agricultural consulting organization whose mission is to help communities save farming. Glynwood also operates its own 220 acre farm. Virginia Kasinki described the programs offered by Glynwood to save farmland and farming as a business activity. She described two programs – “Keep Farming” and “Grow Farming”, and efforts to develop a regional food system in the Hudson Valley.

“Keep Farming” is an information program which brings farmers, town officials and members of the community together to understand how farming contributes to the community in terms of the economic impact of agriculture on jobs and wages, how agriculture helps protect water and air, how local farms contribute to the local food system and how agriculture helps maintain the open space and rural character of a community. Ms. Kasinki stated that information about local agriculture is important to communicate because “this is an industry which has to be respected” for its contribution to the local economy. Ms. Kasinki also noted that the economic contribution of agriculture is often not understood.

“Grow Farming” is a program designed to expand land in farming by matching up landowners who have farmable land with farmers who need land to farm. The Glynwood role in this situation is to help the landowners determine what kind of farming they want on their land, and help put together the deal so both the farmer and the landowner know what to expect from the relationship.

The primary regional food system initiative underway at Glynwood is a project to implement a mobile meat processing facility which meets USDA requirements. A Glynwood task force has been working on developing a regional slaughtering/processing facility for 15 months, and concluded a single site location, costing about \$6 million, was not economically feasible because of the small local throughput. However, mobile facility, built on a huge tractor trailer rig, could be economically viable. This mobile slaughterhouse would require “docking” facilities in different locations in the Hudson Valley which would provide water, electric power, holding pens for the cattle and bathroom and shower facilities for the crews. Zoning would have to support this kind of docking station. Mobile hanging boxes and butchering services could also be developed,

and accompany the mobile slaughterhouse. Ms. Kasinki suggested this mobile slaughterhouse may be a year or two away from implementation, and that local zoning had to be supportive of the docking stations to make the idea work.

Ms. Kasinki mentioned three other ideas that were being worked on in the Hudson Valley:

a. The Community Preservation act allows communities to impose a transfer tax on real estate transactions and use these funds to buy development rights to protect farmland. The NYS Legislature must approve each community's application for this program at this point, but it may become an easier process if a bill now in front of the Legislature is acted on. Examples of this program are described on the Red Hook, Chatham and Warwick web sites.

b. Stop Pesticides – This is a program in Rockland where the county is trying to stop the use of pesticides completely.

c. Local Foods Store – Ms. Kasinki mentioned that there were food stores opening up around the Hudson Valley which only sold foods produced within 50 or 100 miles of the store location.

Ms. Kasinki concluded by saying that the Ancram Ag & Farmland Team Protection should decide what we wanted to do and then determine if Glynwood was going to be able to assist, and how.

2. Grant Status -- Mr. Bassin reported that he had again talked to John Brennan at the NY State Department of Ag & Markets, who confirmed we would be getting the \$25,000 grant.

3. Farm Inventory – The Committee reviewed the revised Inventory form, and decided

a) to hand deliver the Farm Inventory forms to the farmers who would be asked to fill them out, and have them mailed directly to the processing house in Albany for tabulation of the responses;

b) to add to Q 16 to include capturing labor costs, total costs, net income and capital spending related to agriculture in Ancram;

c. to capture property taxes paid by landowners whose property is in agriculture. The Committee concluded this might be best obtained from the town tax assessor, and not by the survey because it would have to include lands owned by and leased by farmers;

Mr. Bassin will coordinate with Ms. Stolzenburg to determine the costs of the survey and the logistics of getting them tabulated.

4. Agricultural Contribution to Ancram's Economy – The Committee restated the importance of developing information on the contributions to taxes and employment currently made by Ancram's farmers. The Farm Inventory will be a major part of this information collection effort.

5. Farmer/Landowner List – The Committee reviewed and revised the farmer/landowner list. Farm operators will be asked to fill out the farm inventory. The Committee will review this list again for completeness and accuracy next time, and finalize the process for distributing and tabulating the inventory. Copies of the revised form will be available at the meeting

6. Next Meeting – The Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan Project Team will meet again on Monday, June 8 at 5 PM at the Town Hall.

Appendix A: List of Farm Operators and Farmland Owners

Farm Owner/Operators (Acres Owned) (Acres Rented from)

Fred Barringer (Nancy Ginsburg)
Art Bassin (Mike Citrin)
Harry & Ken Beneke (George Beneke, Liz Gilmore)
Bill Broe (Dan Slott)
Howard Brooks (Barry Chase)
Camp Hill (Don MacLean)
Jon Clay
Davenport (Woody Baxt)
Don Duksa
Harasymchuczk (Dan Slott)
Larry Lampman
Bill Lutz
Don MacLean
Ken Main (Valden)
Nancy Miller
Millerhurst (Bill Cohan, Crawford Bryant, Dave Webb)
Peele (Niver/Clapper, Woodhull)
Phil Peele, Mill Hill Farm (Frank LaCasse)
Greg Pulver (Frank Martucci)
Jeff Pulver (Bob Podris)
Randy Puris
Ron Osofsky (Ronny Brooke)
Rothvoss
Dennis Sigler
Roy Sloane
Dan Slott
Sommerhoff (Jon Clay)
Larry Stockl
Lloyd Vail (Peck)
Bob Wilcox
John Langdon (Bill Young, Palumbo)

David Levine
Horse Farm @ 8 and East Ancram Rd